

Message Text

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10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 L-03 DODE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /049 W

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P R 250900Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1900

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJ: BONUS STRIKE PARTIAL IN TAMIL NADU

REF: NEW DELHI 14070

1. CONGEN MADRAS REPORTS THAT EXCEPT FOR STOPPAGES IN MADRAS AND COIMBATORE THE BONUS STRIKE CALLED FOR THE ENTIRE STATE OF TAMIL NADU ON OCTOBER 24 DID NOT MATERIALIZE. IN MADRAS, APPROXIMATELY 35,000 WORKERS STAYED AWAY FROM THEIR JOBS IN EIGHT FIRMS, MOST OF WHICH ARE UNDER THE CONTROL OF R. KUCHELAR (EX-CPM AND NOW "INDEPENDENT") AND THE CPM'S CITU. WITH LIMITED EXCEPTIONS THE INTUC AND HMS (CONGRESS-R), THE AITUC (CPI) AND THE DMK ORGANIZED PLANTS DID NOT STRIKE. THE SITUATION IN BOTH MADRAS AND BOIMBATORE IS REPORTEDLY PEACEFUL.

2. AT THIS PINT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE PARTIAL STRIKE IN TAMIL NADU WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A NATION-WIDE STRIKE AS PLANNED. GIVEN THE COMPARATIVE TOLERANCE OF THE DMK GOVERNMENT IN TAMIL NADU FOR LIMITED OPPOSITION

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ACTIVITIES, THE COURAGE TO PROTEST IN THAT STATE MAY BE

GRATER THAN ELSEWHERE.

3. THE IMPORTANCE RMMS TEXTILE UNION INBOMBAY (INTUC) HAS NOW DECLARED THAT THE BONUS SHOULD BE BASED ON PRODUCTION (I.E., QUANTITY OF OUTPUT) RATHER THAN PROFITABILITY (THE GOI'S CRITERION). THIS IS A DEPARTURE FROM THE INTUC POSITION-- AND THAT OF THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS--WHICH VIEWS BONUS AS A DEFERRED WAGE. THE RMMS FORMULA WOULD PROBABLY NOT WORK TO THE BENEFIT OF ENOUGH WORKERS SO AS TO BECOME THE COMMON DEMAND OF ORGANIZED LABOR. THE BOMBAY MILL OWNERS HAVE TOLD THE RMMS THAT BECAUSE OF THE INCOME TAX PROVISIONS OF THE GOI'S LATEST BONUS ORDINANCE THEY WILL NOT DEPART FROM THE PROFITABILITY FORMULA. THE GOI FOR ITS PART HAS INDICATED NO FLEXIBILITY IN ITS POSITION, AND THERE HAVE EVEN BEEN SUGGESTIONS FROM SENIOR LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS THAT THE BONUS SHOULD BE COMPLETELY ELIMINATED. ALTHOUGH FOR THE TIME BEING LABOR APPEARS UNWILLING TO CONFRONT THE GOI ON THE BONUS ISSUE, WE DO NOT THINK THE ISSUE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY LAID TO REST.
SAXBE

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